

## Sea Turtles

# Pre-Post Trip Activities

### **Activity 1. The Game of Survival**

Students will learn some of the threats a turtle hatchling faces after emerging from their nest. In this hands on activity, the students are the turtle hatchlings trying to make it to the ocean. (More instructions can be found on page 3).

### **Activity 2. Sea Turtles Out of Water**

Set out some simple boundaries in an area where kids can run safely. Select someone to be “it” or ask for a volunteer, they will be a predator. Everyone else will be a sea turtle in the ocean. Let them play a round of tag for three minutes and have everyone count how many times they are “it”. At the end of the time, tally up how many total people got tagged. Now repeat the activity, but this time, everyone except the person who is “it” must crawl on all fours because now they are sea turtles on the beach and it's harder to move. At the end of this second round, tally up again how many people were tagged and compare from the first round. Discuss how sea turtles are extremely vulnerable when they are on the beach.



### **Activity 3. Track a Sea Turtle!**

Learn about sea turtle migration and life cycle by keeping track of a live sea turtle! Use tracking websites like [www.seaturtle.org](http://www.seaturtle.org) or [www.conserveturtles.org](http://www.conserveturtles.org) to watch their movements! You can even adopt a sea turtle as a class and support conservation of the species.

### **Activity 4. Comparing Sea Turtles**

Have students in small groups research an assigned sea turtle species. Research the sea turtle's size, diet, habitat, range/distribution, life cycle, reproduction, ect. Then as a class, compare and contrast the five species. This can be done on a board with a 5-column chart that the students can fill in themselves. Discuss different adaptations the sea turtles might have, threats against sea turtles, and how we can help them.

### **Activity 5. Carapace Tales**

Students research their favorite sea turtle species. Fill in a sea turtle graphic with facts, life cycle, threats, and adaptations to create their own sea turtle story. Have students decorate the rest of the turtle to look like their chosen species and present to the class. Or as a class, create a large sea turtle by enlarging the carapace and assigning students to a specific scute with a different detail to research about sea turtles.



### **Activity 6. Sea Turtle Food Chains**

Have students cut out images of vegetation, predators, prey, and sea turtles. Then in small groups, have the students discuss and create a food chain with these images. As an extra challenge, as a whole class, create a food web. Discuss the energy flow throughout the ecosystem, the difference between a food chain and a food web, and why sea turtles are important for the balance of these.

## Additional Instructions

### Activity 1. The Game of Survival

Materials needed: construction paper (at least 8-9 colors), a flat surface, scissors, and glue or tape.

#### Part 1:

- ✿ Cut out small squares of construction paper in each color. Glue or tape these to a slightly bigger black piece of construction paper.
- ✿ Explain to the students that sea turtles go through many threats after they hatch. Every student will be a sea turtle hatchling trying to make it safely to their destination.
- ✿ Lay these cards out on a table. Only one or two of these should be yellow, representing the moon.
- ✿ Have the students grab a card.
- ✿ Go through and tell them what each color represents. Yellow cards should always represent the moon and make it safely to the ocean.



Example: If you had a red card, I'm sorry, a seagull scooped you up as a tasty snack.

Example: I'm sorry, if you had a green card, a raccoon heard you hatching, and ate you before you left the nest.

- ✿ Repeat this game a few times, adding in new threats each time. You can make this part a completion, to see who can remember where the yellow "safe" cards were set down.

#### Part 2:

- ✿ Repeat the step above, this time lay out multiple yellow cards.
- ✿ The goal is the same, to find the moon and reach the ocean. But only one piece of yellow paper is actually the moon, the others represent artificial light on the beach (condos, flashlights, streetlights, etc) that may confuse the turtle hatchlings.
- ✿ Explain to the students that artificial light can confuse hatchlings and lead them away from the water and potentially kill them.

***Making the best better!***